

**SUMMARY OF THE
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CHAIRS MEETING
JUNE 8, 2000**

The Board of Directors (BoD) of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference at 1:30 p.m. on June 8, 2000. The meeting was led by Dr. Ken Jackson, in the absence of Chair Dr. Jim Pearson. He followed the agenda distributed previously to board members. Action items from this meeting are shown in Attachment A, the list of action items from previous meetings is shown in Attachment B, and the list of participants is shown in Attachment C.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Jackson led a review of the minutes of the meeting of this board on May 4, 2000 and the emergency meeting of May 8, 2000. Following discussion, these minutes were approved as amended. Action items (Attachment B) have been updated to reflect that discussion.

ELAB ISSUES

Dr. J. Wilson Hershey, chair of the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) presented issues from ELAB.

ELAB RECOMMENDATION ON CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY DEFINITION

Dr. Hershey reported that ELAB's recommended that the NELAC Quality Systems committee remove the current language in Chapter 5 of the NELAC standard on legal chain-of-custody entirely, since it has a legal application rather than being a routine chain-of-custody practice used in the environmental laboratory community. He noted that while the committee modified the language and moved it to a non-mandatory appendix, ELAB still disagrees with inclusion of this definition in the standard. He stated that legal chain-of-custody is not an essential requirement and requested confirmation from the NELAC BoD that it is not essential to National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) accreditation. Following discussion, it was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that the BoD:

remind the Quality Systems committee that only "essential elements" appear in the NELAC standard; other material is to appear in the "non-mandatory" Appendix E.

ELAB RECOMMENDATION FOR NELAC FUNDING

Dr. Hershey reported that ELAB reviewed options developed by the Transition Committee in its meeting May 11, 2000 and have serious concerns with any changes at this juncture in the development of NELAC. From the minutes of the meeting, he noted that it was approved that:

ELAB reaffirm the importance of EPA retaining a strong leadership role in NELAC by 1) noting their belief that NELAC would no longer exist if a private nonprofit organization assumed functions currently performed by EPA and 2) voicing their concerns that reduction of EPA

support would cause loss of momentum and negatively impact the enrollment of additional states as Accrediting Authorities.

MEETING WITH NORINE NOONAN AND HENRY LONGEST

Dr. Jackson reviewed plans for a meeting scheduled for June 22, 2000 with Dr. Norine Noonan and Mr. Henry Longest to discuss the conceptual approach the Board has developed for the long-term structure of NELAC. There was discussion as to the desirability of inviting ELAB members. It was agreed that ELAB representation would provide an added dimension to the meeting and Ms. Hankins will inquire into the possibility of doing this.

TRANSITION COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Chuck Brokopp, co-chair of the Transition committee, reported that the committee has reviewed its work and has decided to recommend only one option to the Board:

to pursue development of a non-profit NELAC entity in which EPA maintains active participation

This decision is based on consideration of the recognized value of EPA's continued strong involvement in NELAP. The committee has begun development of a 5-yr transition plan that identifies opportunities and risks as well as roles and responsibilities. This will require EPA's support, buy-in, and funding during phase-in. The committee will need help from others who have participated in such a process. The committee envisions a transfer of responsibilities from EPA to this organization to be phased in a stepwise manner during this transition period. Dr. Brokopp emphasized that the committee believes that prior to its investment in detailed planning, advice and consent by the board and by EPA would be essential.

It was agreed that it is essential to maintain NELAC's momentum for the good of all stakeholders. It was also noted that as detailed planning progresses, care must be taken in looking at organizational models, to ensure that the core purposes of NELAC are not compromised. Dr. Brokopp volunteered to continue leading the exploration of viable options, and will investigate financial issues, including issues pertaining to the General Accounting Office.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR NELAC VI

Ms. Hankins reported that persons contacted as possible keynote speakers have unexpected scheduling conflicts with NELAC VI and she asked for additional candidates. Names of possible speakers were discussed and she will check with them.

WITHDRAWAL OF COLORADO AS NELAP AA

Ms. Hankins reported that the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (DPHE) has voluntarily withdrawn as a NELAP-recognized accrediting authority (AA), based on internal

departmental circumstances. This was not initiated by NELAP and in no way is a reflection of the adequacy of the Colorado program. She has asked that DPHE submit a resignation letter, and return their NELAP certificate. She noted that other NELAP accrediting authorities have offered to assist as needed, and that she has not received any complaints from the environmental laboratory community.

CURRENT INFORMATION ON NELAC VII INTERIM MEETING

Ms. Lisa Doucet, NELAC Executive Secretary, reviewed current plans for the Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting. She reported that contract negotiations with the Hotel Riviera in Las Vegas, Nevada are in progress for a November 6-9, 2000 meeting. She noted that per diem costs are significantly lower in Las Vegas and that this matches well with plans for the Seventh NELAC Annual Meeting, scheduled for May 22-25, 2001 in Salt Lake City, Utah..

EXEMPTIONS FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The board considered the request from Ms. Barbara Burmeister, Chair of the Proficiency Testing committee, that the term of service of a current member, scheduled to retire this year, be extended to assist the committee in its efforts. She noted that although this member has served a full term, his expertise is needed for the continued work of the committee, and that a suitable replacement has not been found. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to delay decision until after NELAC VI, while continuing a search for suitable replacement.

The board considered the request from Mr. William Ingersoll, chair of the On-site Assessment committee, that the term of a recently appointed replacement member be permitted to extend to a full term. Since this person has served only a brief period of time (less than 6 months), the Board agreed to grant an exemption in accord with the NELAC policies.

NELAC VI PARLIAMENTARIAN

Ms. Doucet noted that the assistance of a parliamentarian is needed during the voting session at NELAC VI. Following discussion of several candidates, Ms. Doucet agreed to make necessary contacts.

USE OF ISO 25 & 17025

Ms. Hankins reviewed past activities that have occurred to ensure proper coordination of the NELAC standard with International Standards Organization (ISO) standards with respect to copyright issues. She also noted that an unexpected series of communications have complicated matters and that NELAP is working with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to obtain a formal exemption for use of the ISO standards. Until this has been finalized, the NELAC Chapters 5 and 6 will not be available on the website

NELAC VI UPDATE

Ms. Paige Mitchell, of the VA Division of Consolidated Laboratories, and the co-sponsor of NELAC VI, reported that 191 meeting registrations and 272 hotel room registrations have been received, to date. She noted that these figures indicate that registrations are tracking as expected.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of this board, originally scheduled for June 22, 2000 at 1:30 p.m., has been rescheduled for Monday, June 15 at 2:00 p.m. as the result of the Board's meeting with EPA at that time. It will include the NELAC committee chairs. *(Note that the June 15th meeting was subsequently canceled.)*

New Action Items
NELAC Board of Directors and Chairs Meeting
June 8, 2000

Item No.	Action	Status
1	Dr. Pearson, for the Board, will remind the Quality Systems committee that only “essential elements” are to appear in the NELAC standard.	
2	Ms. Hankins will inquire into the possibility of including ELAB representation at the June 22 meeting	
3	Dr. Brokopp will continue to lead exploration of viable options, including financial issues.	
4	Ms. Doucet will make the necessary contacts for a voting session parliamentary.	

**Action Items from Previous Meetings
NELAC Board of Directors and Chairs Meeting
June 8, 2000**

Date of Meeting	Action	Status
4/13/2000	Dr. Jackson, and Dr. Kimsey will provide a short summary of recent Accrediting Authority workgroup teleconferences to Ms. Hankins to be included in the materials for the next board meeting. (Will be an on-going item).	On-going
4/13/2000	Ms. Hankins will send a note to Ms. Finazzo to see if she has contacted the On-Site Assessment committee to relay Board decisions on scoring and attendance of the basic assessors training.	
4/13/2000	Ms. Labie will send the training material for the committee chairs to Ms. Hankins. Ms. Hankins will distribute to the committee chairs for comment.	Completed
4/13/2000	Mr. Wilson Hershey will request that ELAB, ACIL, and any other laboratory organizations identified by either group, provide input on their position on delaying announcement of the first round of accredited laboratories.	Completed
4/13/2000	Ms. Hankins will poll board members for their input on 5.12.4 (chain of custody) to determine if the Board would recommend to the Quality Systems Committee that this section be removed..	Completed
01/11/1999 9	Committee Chairs are to prepare "Frequently Asked Questions" for posting on the NELAC Website. They are to submit these to Dr. Irene Ronning.	On-going
9/23/1999	Dr. Jackson will draft a policy for responding to future offers of NELAC-associated activities at national meetings.	On-going
10/28/1999 9	Ms. Barbara Finazzo will coordinate contact of USEPA regional tribal coordinators to determine extent of existing tribal environmental programs, and interest in NELAC	No further action
12/2/1999	Ms. Hankins will distribute recent Federal Partners' meeting minutes in which exemption of federal agencies as secondary accrediting authorities is addressed.	Completed
1/18/2000	Ms. Hankins will seek clarification on USEPA's NELAC staffing plans.	Clarification requested; awaiting response

Date of Meeting	Action	Status
1/18/2000	Dr. Jackson will update a mailing list and finalize a letter to encourage participation in NELAC committees.	Completed
	Board members will place follow-up calls to recipients as needed.	On-going
2/10/2000	Ms. Finazzo will check on the relevance of a presentation at the 2000 ACS national meeting and report back to the board.	No Response
3/9/2000	Ms. Finazzo will contact On-Site Assessment Committee to relay Board decisions on scoring and attendance of the basic assessors training.	Completed
5/4/00	Ken Jackson to draft letter to ELAB requesting they establish subcommittee to study concerns raised relative to the Field Activities committees work.	Completed
5/4/00	The Membership and Outreach committee will draft a policy addressing the logistics of web-submitted issues: routing, response, etc.	On-going
5/4/00	Jeanne Hankins will send a copy of the current groundrules to all for their review.	Completed
5/4/00	Board members and committee chairs are requested to send any proposed changes to the committee session groundrules to Jeanne Hankins ASAP	Completed
5/4/00	Jeanne Hankins will distribute the draft chair's training materials for review.	Completed
5/4/00	Barb Burmeister will Email the PT committee's process for responding to nominations to Jeanne Hankins.	On-going
5/8/00	The Board's vote to delay announcement of the first class of NELAC-accredited laboratories to January 2001 to be posted on the NELAC website as soon as possible.	Completed
5/8/00	Dr. Brokopp will explore organizational issues with ECOS.	
5/8/00	Dr. Jackson will draft a letter to EPA requesting a meeting to discuss a conceptual proposal for the future of NELAC implementation.	Completed

List of Participants
NELAC Board of Directors and Chairs Meeting
June 8, 2000

Name	Affiliation	Address
Pearson, James Chair (absent)	VA Div. of Consol. Lab Services	T: (804) 786 - 7905 F: (804) 371 - 7973 E: jpearson@dgs.state.va.us
Brokopp, Charles	UT Department of Health	T: (801) 584 - 8450 F: (801) 584 - 8486 E: cbrokopp@doh.state.ut.us
Cada, Ronald	Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Env.	T: (303) 692 - 3096 F: (303) 344 - 9989 E: ron.cada@state.co.us
Doucet, Lisa Executive Secretary	USEPA/OEI	T: (202) 564 - 1416 F: (202) 565 - 2441 E: doucet.lisa@epa.gov
Finazzo, Barbara	USEPA/Region 2	T: (732) 321 - 6754 F: (732) 321 - 4381 E: finazzo.barbara@epamail.epa.gov
Hankins, Jeanne Director	USEPA/ORD	T: (919) 541 - 1120 F: (919) 541 - 4261 E: hankins.jeanne@epa.gov
Jackson, Kenneth	New York State Dept. of Health	T: (518) 485 - 5570 F: (518) 485 - 5568 E: jackson@wadsworth.org
Kimsey, Paul	CA State, Department of Health Services	T: (510) 540 - 2411 F: (510) 540 - 3075 E: pkimsey@dhs.ca.gov
Labie, Sylvia	FL Dept. of Environmental Protection	T: (850) 488 - 2796 F: (850) 922 - 4614 E: labie_s@dep.state.fl.us
Rhyne, Anne	TX Nat. Res. Conserv. Comm.	T: (512) 239 - 1291 F: (512) 239 - 6410 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Sample, Jackie	US Navy/US Dept of Defense	T: (843) 764 - 7337 F: (843) 764 - 7360 E: SampleJH@navsea.navy.mil
Davies, Marcia (invited)	Chair, Program Policy and Structure Committee	T: (402) 697-2555 F: (402) 697-2597 E: marcia.c.davies@usace.army.mil
Hershey, J. Wilson Chair, ELAB (invited)	Lancaster Laboratories, Inc.	T: (717) 656 - 2300 F: (717) 656 - 0450 E: jwhershey@lancasterlabs.com
Tatsch, Gene Contractor Support	Research Triangle Institute	T: (919) 541 - 6930 F: (828) 628 - 0659

	E: cet@rti.org
--	----------------